

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

November 21, 2011

7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, November 21, 2011, in the media center of the Block Island School. Superintendent Robert Hicks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Elizabeth Connor, Patricia Doyle, Ann Hall, and William Padien. Sean McGarry was not in attendance.

Annual Meeting

William Padien was nominated for chairperson by Elizabeth Connor; the nomination was seconded by Ann Hall. Being no further nominations, the vote was 4-0 to approve William Padien as chairperson.

Sean McGarry was nominated for secretary by William Padien; the nomination was seconded by Ann Hall. Being no further nominations, the vote was 4-0 to approve Sean McGarry as secretary.

Policy DCD: Contacting Legal Counsel requires the appointment of one person on the School Committee to coordinate requests for assistance from the appointed legal counsel. A motion (Padien, Hall) to appoint the chairperson to coordinate requests for assistance from the appointed legal counsel carried with a vote of 4-0.

Approval of Minutes

A motion (Hall, Padien) to approve the minutes of the meeting held on October 17, 2011, as written carried with a vote of 4-0.

Reports

Ann Hall reported that the Wellness Committee had a meeting.

Elizabeth Connor reported that Block Island School has been enrolled in the rewards program at Stop & Shop. If you register your card, a percentage of your purchase is given back to your chosen school. Mrs. Hall suggested that a hard copy of this information be sent home as well as sent electronically.

William Padien reported that the yearly pre-budget meeting with the Town Council will be held on December 7 at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Hicks updated the School Committee on the adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), stating that they are designed to have all students in the nation studying towards the same academic standards. Currently, standards exist for language arts and mathematics with implementation to be accomplished by 2014. The state is leading the curriculum development and Block Island School is part of the mathematics cohort of nine southern Rhode Island districts being led by the Dana Center. We are not part of a language arts cohort, but are implementing the standards through the work of Principal Karen Kurzman, who is one of the state's trainers.

Mr. Hicks reported that the budget is approximately \$6,000 to the good, but he is expecting all of the money in each area to be spent. The solar panel project is in progress and Mr. Hicks was pleased to report that none of the roof had to be replaced, which should get us back to the original estimate for that project. Substantial funds to cover the plumbing expenses have been found, mostly in the maintenance

budget. A motion (Padien, Connor) to accept the fiscal report through October 31, 2011, as presented carried with a vote of 4-0.

Old Business

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve Policy IK-1: Discipline as posted for the required 30 days carried with a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Hicks reported that there were 81 responses to the school calendar survey regarding whether to have the traditional vacation weeks in February and April or a vacation in March that is slightly longer than one week. The responses were reasonably divided with no general consensus. Information submitted by the teachers showed three out of five prefer leaving the calendar as is. Mrs. Connor suggested that with no clear “winner” we should try the March vacation or at least alternate it with the traditional vacation every other year. Mrs. Hall would be in favor of a March vacation if it were held earlier in the month, but if that weren’t an option would go with the traditional calendar. Pat Doyle was in favor of the calendar that works best for education and not necessarily for the convenience of the parents. (At the meeting on December 19, 2011, Mrs. Doyle clarified her comment. She explained that the School Committee needs to consider accommodating the parents and that one can not exist without the other.) A motion (Padien, Hall) to stay with the traditional calendar (Option 1) carried with a vote of 3-1 with Elizabeth Connor voting in the negative.

Mr. Hicks submitted a memorandum to the School Committee regarding the schedule change to accommodate athletics. The current proposal would lengthen the school day by 30 minutes Mondays through Thursdays and shorten the school day on Fridays. A waiver is not required from RIDE as long as the proposal complies with the required instructional minutes. The survey generated 36 responses and Mr. Hicks submitted the participants’ comments, which shows, for various reasons, that there is not clear support for the proposal. There is a widespread feeling that the entire school should not have to change in order to accommodate the 35 students involved in athletics. Mr. Hicks feels the amount of instructional time missed by students is unacceptable and wants to be sure we don’t have a system that promotes missing school. More community outreach is needed to explain the problem and seek ways to solve it. Would the community be willing to pay the cost to separate the schedules? Mr. Hicks suggested that an afternoon workshop be held to continue this discussion so that everyone understands even if they don’t agree. It was suggested that the students be included in any discussion regarding the schedule change. A work session was scheduled for Thursday, December 15 at 4:00 p.m.

New Business

Mr. Hicks reported that Policy GD: Notification to Parents and Subsequent Action for Head Lice Infestation is in conflict with current medical practice and has been updated to bring it into alignment with the Center for Disease Control guidelines. A motion (Padien, Hall) to post Policy GD: Notification to Parents and Subsequent Action for Head Lice Infestation for the required 30-day period carried with a vote of 4-0.

Policy HIA: Student Activities Advisors has been updated to reflect the current stipend for National Honor Society. A motion (Padien, Hall) to post Policy HIA: Student Activities Advisors for the required 30-day period carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the request from Jamie Johnston and Zena Clark to home school their son, Fisher, from February 1-March 11, 2012, while on an extended family vacation carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the request from Alba Santana to home school her son, Hector, from December 7, 2011-January 12, 2012, while on an extended family vacation carried with a vote of 4-0. The resolution on pension reform was not addressed because the Rhode Island Legislature had already passed a reform bill.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to consent to the appointment of Mark Mollicone as the head coach for the boys' varsity basketball team carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Paul Vitu as the assistant coach for the boys' varsity basketball team carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Robert Closter, Jr. as the head coach for the girls' varsity basketball team carried with a vote of 4-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Paul Vitu as the head coach for the boys' junior high basketball team carried with a vote of 4-0.

Several changes were made to the Athletic Handbook to reflect current practice and to ensure that the current/correct copy is circulated. A section on Daily Eligibility was added, as well as giving the athletic director the right to determine the level at which students in grade nine will play. A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the changes to the Athletic Handbook regarding structure and daily eligibility carried with a vote of 4-0.

Calendar of Events

A calendar of events for the months of November and December was submitted for School Committee information. The annual pre-budget discussion between the School Committee and Town Council is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7 at Town Hall. A work session to discuss the school schedule revision has been scheduled for 4:00 p.m. on December 15. The next regular meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for Monday, December 19.

Correspondence

Correspondence was received from the Harbor Church thanking the students who helped with Roll Call Dinner.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 8:52 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 4-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: December 19, 2011 (as amended)